

Thomson, Robert Boyd

Oct. 1915-Apr. 1916
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BOTANICAL LABORATORIES

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

13 October, 1915

President R. A. Falconer,
University of Toronto.

Dear Mr. President:

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We are in difficulty over the enforced removal of Mr. Simpson from 9 Queen's Park. The garden is left unprotected after hours and on holidays, and already children and adults are finding out that the place is unguarded. Damage and losses may occur at any time, and the matter of securing protection should be given immediate attention. Mr. Simpson's removal also necessitates the services of a fireman for night and holiday duty, and since no appropriation was made to cover this expenditure, we shall need an extra \$100 to \$125 for the purpose.

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If I did not realize the financial straits of the University, I should also ask for more greenhouse accommodation. This has been needed for several years, but this year is more vitally important than ever. Dr. Howe has asked for space for some experimental work and I need a considerable amount for Plant Breeding, for which provision has never been made. Our collections, too, which have been obtained from other Botanic Gardens will have to be sacrificed unless help comes. It is a suicidal policy that we are pursuing, and I feel that I should be neglecting my duty if I did not draw your attention to the matter now. Relief for the next four or five years could be

President R. A. Falconer - 2

had by the present expenditure of about \$4,000.

Yours respectfully,

R. B. Thomson

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BOTANICAL LABORATORIES
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

10 November, 1915

President R. A. Falconer,
University of Toronto.

Dear Mr. President:

There are three points which I submit to you as appearing to me important in connection with the Officers Training Corps. In the first place, if there is a crisis and a need of trained men, could not the O.T.C. do more than any other body to emphasize this and to instill it into the student mind by rushing the training of men? If, as was stated by an officer at yesterday's meeting, the course is a two-year one, and, as was stated by another, that similar training could be had elsewhere in six weeks, surely the attitude of the students is a very natural one. I believe that this is the fundamental trouble and manifests itself in several ways - discontent with the training, discontent with the possibilities of progress, discontent with the results of the examinations. If you wish to take the time to interview one or two men who trained last year, I think they will state the details of the difficulties so as to make this point clear. To meet this point ~~three~~ remedies occur to me:

- 1) More severe training (and as a result, more contented students;
- 2) A progressive series of instruction units, with easy access to a higher grade when the student is proficient in the lower;
- 3) More frequent final examinations;
- 4) No discrimination to be made between men in their chances to receive training;
- 5) Possibilities of drilling every day in the week.

President Falconer - 2

In the second place, in fostering a proper spirit among the students, I think it is very apparent that there has been and is a very serious defect in our whole educational system (Public and High School and University) - a lack of any systematic attempt to train all students in the duties and responsibilities of citizenship and in world problems. Could we not substitute in place of the Old World History course a course to meet the present need, and turn out into the community a set of graduates who would be better prepared to take their stand on the great problems of the day. Such men would become so vitally important in the community that our University would need to make no special appeals for funds to carry on its great work. An introductory lecture or two by yourself, Sir, could make the seriousness of the preparation for citizenship apparent to the whole student mass, especially at this time of crisis.

The third point to which I wish to refer is the credit system for military training. It appears to me very much less important than the other two, but when credits are established, varying from zero to II Year Honor subjects, it is apparent dissatisfaction must exist and that this system should be revised.

Yours respectfully,

R. B. Thomson

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March 11th, 1916

Professor R. E. Thomson,
Botany Department.

Dear Professor Thomson:

We have no control over Surrey Villa, and there is no likelihood of its being rented by us during the coming year. I was under the impression that arrangements were made not long ago that Mr. Simpson should live near the Botany Building in order that he might be able to give more direct attention to the Garden.

Yours sincerely,

President.

Apr 17th 1916

Dear President Falconer

Miss Sucker asked me if I would get an opinion of the work she presented for her "M.A." last spring, from a Specialist. She wished to know if she was capable of doing research work, in order that she might know how to decide as to her future.

Two or three months ago I sent a copy of her article to Prof Yapp of Belfast who is one of the best physiological ecologists in Great Britain - indeed one of the foremost if not the foremost in the world. I gave him no information other than that the candidate had done the work practically without assistance during one summer, and asked him for an opinion of the value of the work and also for an opinion of the ^{candidate} as a possible research student.

I received the enclosed letter today, which I thought you should see before I sent it on to her.

To President Falconer
The University

Sincerely yours
R. B. Thomson

April 18th, 1916

Professor R. E. Thomson,
University of Toronto.

Dear Professor Thomson:

I am returning to you Professor Yapp's letter together with the accompanying notes. I am glad to know that he has given such a favourable opinion to Miss Tucker's work.

I am not clear from your letter which is the next step that you desire to have taken. Is it a case of the registration for the Ph.D. degree? If so, does Dr. Faull object to the registration. Perhaps your simplest way would be to speak to him directly about it.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.

BOTANICAL LABORATORIES

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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April 20th, 1916

President Falconer,

University of Toronto.

Dear President Falconer,

I sent you Professor's Yapp's letter merely to let you know the opinion of a specialist with regard to Miss Tucker's work. Of her future course of action, I know nothing, but I fear she will not come to Toronto, and that all we can do for her if she decides to go on, will be to help her to get into another University.

Yours sincerely,

R. B. Thomsen

